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over the chiefs organized wrestling matches between teams of the two villages. Before the visitors left, a feast (nilili, swallow feast) was given in their honor. The motives for these trading expeditions were both economic and ceremonial. They were organized by a chief when the villagers actually required certain economic goods, but even when there was no economic need, goods were exchanged and the men of the two villages participated in wrestling, dancing, and feasting.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

The Bacairi claim not to have been a warlike people. They defended themselves if attacked, but say that they did not attack others. Each village had a chief (piree) who was assisted by an aide. There was no chief for the whole tribe. The aide, who was a young man, was selected by the chief with the consent of the villagers. The aide could be the son of the chief but this is not a requirement, for any able young man was eligible for this position. At the death of the chief the aide succeeded him.

The principal functions of the chief were economic, judicial, and ceremonial. As we have seen, the chief organized trading expeditions and participated in such activities as collective planting and house building. He also represented the people of his village when visitors arrived or when his own village made formal visits. If the village feared attack the piree selected a particularly brave man to lead the defense or to undertake retaliation. Discussions concerning disputes and other village affairs took place in the ceremonial house. Murderers were exiled or if a war was on the murderer was made to bear the brunt of the attack. Thieves, adulterers, and others who persisted in disturbing the peace and harmony of the village were exiled through the common action of the villagers. Exile was considered severe punishment, for the Bacairi say that individuals who were exiled often committed suicide. Chiefs among the Bacairi, therefore, were not war leaders, nor was succession governed by descent. Chiefs seem, thus, to have been primarily leaders of social activities. The part which a chief played in ceremonial life will be described later.